DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 320 580 IR 053 177

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TITLE The ERIC Search: A Programmed Text.
PUB DATE Sep 89
NOTE 29p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Databases; Library Instruction; *Online Searching; *Optical Data Disks; Programed Instructional Materials; *Search Strategies
IDENTIFIERS *ERIC; *SilverPlatter Information Inc

ABSTRACT

This text is intended as a guide for searching ERIC using the SilverPlatter CD-ROM database. The text describes the content and function of the ERIC database and demonstrates fundamental search techniques by following an example of a successful ERIC computer search. The search begins with the choice of a topic, the formulation of a search strategy, and the printing of relevant sources. It is noted that the programmed text requires the active use of SilverPlatter's ERIC database and the "Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors." (GL)

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ED320580

THE ERIC SEARCH: A PROGRAMMED TEXT

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SEPTEMBER 1989

IR053177

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to THE ERIC SEARCH: A PROGRAMMED TEXT.
This text is intended as a guide for searching ERIC using the SilverPlatter CD-ROM database. The text demonstrates fundamental search techniques by following an example of a successful ERIC computer search. The search begins with the choice of a topic, outlines a search strategy, and prints relevant sources. The programmed text requires the active use of SilverPlatter's ERIC database and the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors. THE ERIC SEARCH: A PROGRAMMED TEXT ....

* Describes the function and content of the ERIC database;
* Uses the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors to identify appropriate descriptors;
* Uses Boolean operators AND, OR, IN to combine descriptors and focus the search;
* Prints records.

INSTRUCTIONS

Instructional material appears in a series of small units, called FRAMES. Bold-faced words in a frame highlight important concepts to remember. Read frames carefully and formulate answers to the questions. Cover the answer column (on the right) with a card. After making a response, expose the correct answer; if answers do not match those on the right ???, reread suggested frames.
If there are questions, ask the librarian for help.

1

The United States government established the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) in 1966. ERIC has sixteen regional clearinghouses that provide citizens access to educational literature.

2

ERIC collects and disseminates many kinds of educational literature. Examples include teaching guides, lesson plans, tests, research reports, dissertations, practicum papers, and conference proceedings. Education students and teachers can find curriculum guides in _____.

ERIC

3

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) also produces an index to educational literature. The ERIC index helps citizens locate journal articles and documents. The ERIC index, in fact, is the primary source used to locate unpublished educational documents. The ERIC index helps students, teachers, and parents find literature on _____ topics.

Educational

4

A description of each journal article and document in the ERIC index is called a RECORD. There are over 500,000 records in the large ERIC System. The ERIC index gives each record its own access number. Accession numbers for all journal articles begin with EJ and accession numbers for all documents start with ED. Students can recognize journal records from document records by their _____ _____.

Accession number (AN)

5

ERIC indexes each record by assigning a set of DESCRIPTORS. Descriptors are keywords that identify the topics discussed in a record. Find records on any education topic by first choosing appropriate descriptors to match the topic. Use descriptors to find ERIC records on educational _____.

Topics

6

The Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors lists all ERIC descriptors. Use the ERIC index along with the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors to find document records (ED's) and _____ _____records (EJ's) on any educational topic.

Journal article

?

Read Frame 3

7

The Thesaurus is arranged like a dictionary, in alphabetical order. Descriptors appear alphabetically and in large, bold-faced print. The large, bold-faced print helps students, teachers, and parents recognize that these are useable _____.

Descriptors

8

The Thesaurus gives additional information under descriptors such as SCOPE NOTE (SN), USE REFERENCE (USE), and USE FOR REFERENCE (UF). This information helps students, teachers, and parents choose appropriate descriptors to match their topic. Read all the useful information given under a _____.

Descriptor

9

The SCOPE NOTE (SN), for instance, defines the descriptor. Read a descriptor's Scope Note to understand what the term means to ERIC. The Scope Note clarifies the meaning of a _____.

Descriptor

10

The USE REFERENCE (USE) is another feature of the Thesaurus. If students, teachers, or parents try to choose a word that is not a useable descriptor, the Thesaurus provides a Use Reference. The Use Reference directs attention to the correct, useable descriptor. Follow a Use Reference (USE) command to locate the _____ descriptor.

Correct or useable

11

Within a descriptor entry, the Thesaurus provides other descriptors that are broader in meaning, narrower in meaning, or related in meaning to the original descriptor. This special feature allows similar descriptors to be listed in the same entry. BROADER TERMS (BT), NARROWER TERMS (NT), and RELATED TERMS (RT) are useable descriptors. The Thesaurus provides these additional descriptors to help students, teachers, and parents better identify a research _____.

Topic

12

In summary, students, teachers, and parents should search _____ to find literature on educational topics. The first step of an ERIC literature search or finding ERIC records is to compile a list of all relevant descriptors found in the _____.

ERIC

?

Read Frames 1-3

Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors

?

Read Frame 5

The following exercise illustrates the steps taken in a routine ERIC literature search. Use the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors to complete the first step of a literature search.

13

Suppose a classroom assignment requires current information on the topic "teenage drinking." First consult the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors to find descriptors that identify the topic. OPEN THE THESAURUS to the term "teenager." This is not a large, bold-faced useable descriptor. What is the correct descriptor ? _____

Adolescents

?

Make sure you are in the first section of the Thesaurus.

Read Frame 9

14

Turn to the descriptor "adolescents" and read its Scope Note (SN). Adolescents covers what age group?

_____

13 to 17 year olds

?

Read Frame 8

15

Next, turn to the descriptor "drinking." Is this a large, bold-faced useable descriptor? _____

What is one other descriptor related to the original term "drinking"? _____

Yes

?

Read Frame 7

Alcoholic-beverages

or

Alcoholism

or

Drug-abuse, etc.

?

Read Frame 10

16

What two descriptors adequately define the topic "teenage drinking"? _____ and _____.

Adolescents and drinking

?

Read Frames 12-14

17

The computer has powerful literature search capabilities. It can take two unrelated descriptors and link them together to form one concept. The computer can take two related descriptors and link them together to form one larger concept. Connector words AND, OR, IN, NOT, WITH, & NEAR tell the computer to link descriptors. Descriptors must be connected by _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, & _____.

AND, OR, IN,
NOT, WITH, & NEAR

18

The AND connector links two unrelated descriptors, adolescents and drinking, together to form one concept "adolescent drinking." The AND connector tells the computer to find records dealing with both topics, adolescents and drinking. Records found by the _____ connector will contain both descriptors.

Hint: The AND connector narrows the search focus.

AND

19

The OR connector links related descriptors, drinking or alcoholic-beverages or alcoholism, together to form one larger search. The OR connector tells the computer to find records dealing with any one of the related topics. Records found by the _____ connector may contain any one or all the descriptors drinking, alcoholic-beverages, alcoholism.

HINT: The OR connector broadens the search focus.

OR

20

The AND connector and the OR connector link descriptors together. The AND connector links _____ descriptors together while the OR connector links related descriptors together. The IN connector, on the other hand, performs a different function from either the AND OR connectors.

Unrelated

?

Read Frame 18

21

Information in a record is organized into FIELDS. ERIC labels each field with a two-letter abbreviation. All records have an Accession Number field (AN), an Author field (AU), a Title field (TI), a Publication Year field (PY), a Descriptor field (DE), and an Abstract field (AB). The abbreviation (DE) labels the _____ field.

Descriptor

22

The IN connector tells the computer to search for information in specific fields. Records found by the IN connector will have the exact information wanted in its _____.

Field

?

Read Frame 21

23

The connector words AND, OR, IN, NOT, WITH, & NEAR are powerful command words because they tell the computer what to do. Descriptors can stand alone, but when they are linked by connector words, the literature search becomes more relevant. The two useable descriptors for teenage drinking are "adolescents" and "drinking." What connector word links these two unrelated descriptors? _____

AND

?

Read Frames 17-18

USE THE COMPUTER TO COMPLETE THE LAST STEPS OF THE ERIC LITERATURE SEARCH. RETYPE THE BOLD-FACED TEXT EXACTLY AS SHOWN.

24

You are ready to begin the ERIC literature search for records using the descriptors found in the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors. PRESS THE F7 KEY to restart the system. Does the FIND: _ prompt appear on the screen's lower left corner? _____ Descriptors are typed into the computer at the FIND: _ prompt.

Yes

?

Ask the librarian for help

25

Adolescents and drinking are useable descriptors. The computer will find records dealing with these two topics if both descriptors appear in the record's Descriptor field. The IN connector tells the computer to look for adolescents and drinking in the record's _____ field. ADOLESCENTS IN DE and DRINKING IN DE tells the computer to search for these two words in the record's Descriptor field.

Descriptor

?

Read Frame 22

26

At the FIND: _ prompt, type:
ADOLESCENTS IN DE AND DRINKING IN DE
(No need to capitalize, but do spell correctly and leave spaces). PRESS THE ENTER KEY. How many lines appear on the screen? _____

Three

Check for typing errors

27

The screen shows the number of records found for each descriptor. It also shows the number of records found for the two unrelated descriptors linked. Are the number of records found for ADOLESCENTS IN DE AND DRINKING IN DE (line #3) more or less than ADOLESCENTS (line #1)? _____
More or less than DRINKING (line #2)? _____

Hint: The AND connector makes the search more specific. AND reduces the number of records found.

Less
Less
?
Read Frame 18

28

The basic literature search is complete. All records found in Line #3 deal with the topic "adolescent drinking." Two options are available at this point: accept the search as it is or tailor the search to fit more specific needs. Since this classroom assignment call for current information on teenage drinking, tailor the basic search to fit the more specific requirement. Use connector words to do this. Connectors are _____, _____, _____, NOT, WITH, & NEAR.

AND, OR, IN

?

Read Frame 17

29

The basic literature search used the AND connector to link two unrelated descriptors, adolescents and drinking, together to form one concept. The basic search also used the IN connector to tell the computer what field to search, the Descriptor field. To tailor the basic search, tell the computer to look for information in other fields. Since current information on teenage drinking is needed, tell the computer to look in a record's Publication Year field for current dates. The two letter abbreviation for Publication Year field is _____.

PY

?

Read Frame 21

30

The AND connector links unrelated descriptors together but can also link the original search with new specifications.

At the FIND: _ prompt, type this:

#3 AND 1987-1989 IN PY

PRESS THE ENTER KEY. (The computer accepts line #'s; do not retype descriptors). The connector word _____ links the original search with the Publication Year field search. The IN connector, on the other hand, tells the computer to look for the dates 1987-1989 in the record's _____ _____ field.

HINT: The AND connector makes the search more relevant.

AND

?

Read Frame 18

Publication Year

?

Read Frame 22

31

Tailoring the basic search is also possible by specifying educational grade level. Choose a MANDATORY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL DESCRIPTOR to identify the educational grade level discussed in a record. ERIC tags every record with a Mandatory Educational Level Descriptor. The Thesaurus lists these descriptors alphabetically but also brings them together in a chart found in the Introduction. Mandatory Educational Level Descriptors identify the grade level discussed in a _____.

Record

32

Mandatory Educational Level Descriptors that match adolescents (ages 13-17) are the broader term "secondary-education" and the narrower terms "junior-high-schools" and "high-schools." Open the Thesaurus to the descriptor "secondary-education." What grade levels are listed in its Scope Note (SN)? _____ Next, turn to the descriptor "high-schools." This term covers grade levels _____. Turn to the descriptor "junior-high-schools" and list its grade levels _____.

HINT: Use all three descriptors to thoroughly cover adolescents.

Grades 7-12

Grades 9-12

Grades 7-9

?

Read Frame 9

33

The descriptors "secondary-education," "high-schools," and "junior-high-schools" all reflect the educational grade level of adolescents. Tell the computer to link related descriptors together with the _____ connector.

OR

?

Read Frames 19-20

34

Type multiple word descriptors with a hypen. For example, the descriptor "secondary-education" should be typed SECONDARY-EDUCATION IN DE

The hypen makes the computer look for the two words together. The correct way to type the descriptor "junior high schools" is _____.

JUNIOR-HIGH-SCHOOLS IN DE

?

Read Frames 25-26

35

Take the basic search, tailored by date (Line #4), and tailor this by educational grade level. At the FIND: _ prompt, type:

SECONDARY-EDUCATION IN DE OR HIGH-SCHOOLS IN DE OR JUNIOR-HIGH-SCHOOLS IN DE

PRESS THE ENTER KEY. How many lines are on the screen now? _____

Eight

?

Make sure to hypenate multiple word descriptors

36

The screen shows the number of records found for each educational grade level descriptor. It also shows the number of records found for the three related descriptors linked together (Line #8). The OR connector enlarges the number of records found. The OR connector _____ the search focus.

Broadens

?

Read Frame 19-20

37

The AND connector links the original search with new specifications. At the FIND:_ prompt, type this:

#4 AND #8

PRESS THE ENTER KEY. The connector word _____ links the original search, tailored by date, with the educational grade level search. Typing #4 is just like retyping the basic search descriptors _____ and _____.

AND

?

Read Frame 30

Adolescents and Drinking

?

Read Frame 30

38

The screen shows the basic search (Line #3) and also a search tailored by date (Line #4) and by educational grade level (Line #9). Focusing on a record's publication date and educational grade level are only two ways to tailor a search. The basic search can be tailored further by telling the computer to look for specific information in other _____.

Fields

?

Read Frame 22

39

It is important to check search results for relevant records on "adolescent drinking;" certain records will be of more interest than others. Look at the original search tailored by date and grade level (Line #9). At the FIND:_ prompt, press F4, the SHOW FUNCTION KEY. PRESS THE ENTER KEY. The Show Function Key (F4) displays records on the screen. Does record number one appear on the screen's upper right corner? _____

Yes

?

Ask the librarian for help

40

The screen shows the first record matching all search requirements. Continue to view additional screens by pressing the PAGE DOWN KEY. Press the Page Down Key a couple of times. Are new pages appearing on the screen? _____ Reread previous screens by pressing the PAGE UP KEY. Tell the computer to display search results by pressing the _____ Key.

Yes

Show Function Key

F4

?

Read Frame 39

41

Suppose record numbers 1,3,7,13-15, and 20 are relevant to the topic. The computer can print CITATIONS, the information needed to find these journal articles and documents. A citation includes information from the Author field (AU), the Title field (TI), the Publication Year field (PY), and the Journal or Corporate Source fields (JN)(CS). This information is also used for term paper bibliographies, research paper bibliographies, and report bibliographies. The author, title, publication year, and journal or corporate source fields contain the information needed for a term paper's _____.

Bibliography

42

The computer can print the record's citation or the complete record including its abstract. The search strategy, used to find these records, can be printed too. ACTIVATE THE PRINTER BY PRESSING F6, THE PRINT FUNCTION KEY. Do print settings appear on the lower-portion of the screen?

_____

Yes

?

Ask the librarian for help

43

The computer is ready to print citations (PRINT FIELDS:CITN) A citation includes information from the _____, _____, _____, _____ or corporate source fields. The computer needs to know what record numbers to print. PRESS THE TAB KEY ONCE to advance prompt to RECORDS:_. Type:

1,3,7,13-15,20

The computer will print the search strategy too. PRESS THE TAB KEY TWICE to advance prompt to SEARCHES:_. HIT THE SPACE BAR ONCE to SEARCHES:YES. PRESS THE ENTER KEY. Is the printer typing the search strategy and the seven relevant citations? _____

Author, Title, Publication Year, and Journal

?

read Frame 41

Yes

?

Printer problem - Ask librarian for help

44

The computer can print the complete record including its abstract. Print the complete record number 20. Type this:

ALL

Does the screen show PRINT FIELDS:ALL_____? PRESS THE TAB KEY ONCE TO RECORDS:_. Type this:

20

PRESS THE ENTER KEY. Is the printer typing the complete record _____?

Yes

?

Ask librarian for help

Yes

?

Ask librarian for help

45

PRESS THE F7 KEY to restart the system. The ERIC literature search is complete; turn the printer knob and detach the printout. To find journal articles (EJ's) on the printout, check the library's periodical / journal list. To find documents (ED's) check to see if the library owns the ED Documents collection on microfiche. Documents are arranged by ED Accession numbers. If the library does not own a journal or document, as the librarian to obtain item from another library.

46

For a successful search, follow these rules:

* Decide on the topic;
* Choose appropriate descriptors from the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors;
* Correctly type descriptors into the computer;
* Use correct connector words;
* Scan search results for relevant records;
* Print the citations or complete records.

47

When search results are not relevant to the topic, follow these suggestions:

* Go back to the Thesaurus and choose more appropriate descriptors;
* Alter the search by linking original descriptors with new ones; or
* Eliminate descriptors.

Whenever problems develop in the search, remember one thing: ASK A LIBRARIAN FOR HELP.

ANSWER CARD

ANSWER CARD